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ANNOTATED
POEMS OF



MILTON'S
IL PENSEROSO

Standard English
ANCHORS

EDITED BY
GEO. B. WHITTAKER
NEW YORK



Now in course of publication, in crown 8vo.

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OF
ENGLISH AUTHORS.

EDITED BY THE

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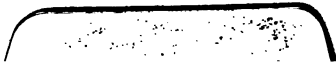
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IL PENNEROSO

BY JOHN MILTON



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JOHN MILTON.

JOHN MILTON, a poet of the first rank, was born in London in 1608, and died in 1674. His ancestors derived their name from the estate of Milton, near Thame, in Oxfordshire, of which they were the proprietors.¹ He was educated at St. Paul's School, London, and Christ's College, Cambridge, and was ultimately appointed Latin Secretary to Oliver Cromwell and the Parliament. The last twenty years of his life were spent in total blindness; and yet during this period he composed his most important poem, 'Paradise Lost.' He wrote also many other works, both in poetry and prose, the chief of which are 'Paradise Regained,' 'Comus' (a mask, or play, performed at Ludlow Castle, in 1634, before the Earl of Bridgewater), 'L'Allegro,' 'Il Penseroso,' and 'Samson Agonistes'; with various Sonnets, Odes, and Hymns.

¹ There are two villages in this neighbourhood, Great and Little Milton, and at least twelve others, in various parts of England, bearing the same name.

CRITICISM

ON

'L'ALLEGRO' AND 'IL PENSEROSO.'



DR. JOHNSON says, 'Of the two pieces "L'Allegro" and "il Penseroso," I believe, opinion is uniform; every man that reads them, reads them with pleasure. The author's design is not, what Theobald has remarked, merely to show how objects derive their colours from the mind, by representing the operation of the same things upon the gay and the melancholy temper, or upon the same man as he is differently disposed; but rather how, among the successive variety of appearances, every disposition of mind takes hold on those by which it may be gratified.

'The *cheerful* man hears the lark in the morning; the *pensive* man hears the nightingale in the evening. The *cheerful* man sees the cock strut, and hears the horn and hounds echo in the wood; then walks, *not unseen*, to observe the glory of the rising sun, or listens to the singing milkmaid, and views the labours of the ploughman and the mower; then casts his eyes about him over scenes of smiling plenty, and looks up to the distant tower, the residence of some fair inhabitant: thus he pursues real gaiety through a day of labour or of play, and delights himself at night with the fanciful narratives of superstitious ignorance.

'The *pensive* man, at one time, walks *unseen* to muse

at midnight ; and, at another, hears the sullen curfew. If the weather drives him home, he sits in a room lighted only by *glowing embers*, or by a lonely lamp outwatches the North Star, to discover the habitation of separate souls, and varies the shades of meditation by contemplating the magnificent or pathetic scenes of tragic and epic poetry. When the morning comes, a morning gloomy with rain and wind, he walks into the dark trackless woods, falls asleep by some murmuring water, and with melancholy enthusiasm expects some dream of prognostication, or some music played by aërial performers.

'Both Mirth and Melancholy are solitary, silent inhabitants of the breast, that neither receive nor transmit communication : no mention is therefore made of a philosophical friend, or a pleasant companion. The seriousness does not arise from any participation of calamity, nor the gaiety from the pleasures of the bowl.

'The man of *cheerfulness*, having exhausted the country, tries what *towered cities* will afford, and mingles with scenes of splendour—gay assemblies and nuptial festivities : but he mingles a mere spectator ; as, when the learned comedies of Jonson, or the wild dramas of Shakespeare, are exhibited, he attends the theatre.

'The *pensive* man never loses himself in crowds, but walks the cloister, or frequents the cathedral. Milton probably had not yet forsaken the Church.

'Both his characters delight in music ; but he seems to think that cheerful notes would have obtained from Pluto a complete dismissal of Eurydice, of whom solemn sounds only procured a conditional release.

'For the oldage of cheerfulness he makes no provision ; but melancholy he conducts with great dignity to the

6 *Criticism on 'L'Allegro' and 'Il Penseroso.'*

close of life. His cheerfulness is without levity, and his pensiveness without asperity.

'Through these two poems the images are properly selected and nicely distinguished ; but the colours of the diction seem not sufficiently discriminated. I know not whether the characters are kept sufficiently apart. No mirth can, indeed, be found in his melancholy ; but I am afraid that I always meet some melancholy in his mirth. They are two noble efforts of imagination.'



' But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale.'—*l.* 155.

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE, vain deluding joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred !

1 **Il Penseroso**, i.e. the Pensive Man. This is a companion poem to 'L'Allegro,' the Cheerful Man. **Hence**. 'L'Allegro' began in the same strain : 'Hence loathed Melancholy.' **vain**. Useless. **deluding** (Lat. *deludo*, to deceive). Cheating, deceiving. So called because pleasure is always less in actual enjoyment than it seems in anticipation.

2 **Brood of Folly without Father bred**. In 'L'Allegro' the poet gave the genealogy of Melancholy and Mirth. Now he calls the pleasures of Mirth deluding joys, and says they are born of Folly as their mother, but have no father. **brood** is from O.E. *bredan*, to nourish ; whence we get breed, bred, brood (verb), and bread.

How little you bested
 Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys !
 Dwell in some idle brain, 5
 And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
 As thick and numberless
 As the gay motes that people the sunbeams ;

3 **Bested.** To avail or be of advantage, stand in stead to, stand by. Sir Francis Drake, in giving an account of his West Indian voyage, when speaking of a quantity of dried fish which he had captured from the enemy and distributed among his fleet, says : ' The same was so new and good it did greatly *bestead* us in the whole course of our voyage.' *Bestead* also means put, placed, situated. The O.E. *stede* meant a place. Hence, instead, in the place of another ; *bedstead*, a place for the bed ; *homestead* ; *Sheepstead* (Berks) ; *Hampstead* (Middlesex). Barrow says, ' He who looks so deformedly and dismally, who in outward sight is so ill *bestead* and so pitifully accoutred, hath latent in him much of admirable beauty and glory.' Cf. Isa. viii. 21. ' And they shall pass through it hardly *bestead* and hungry.'

4 **Fixed mind.** Determined, resolute, settled, alluding to a person of fixed character.

5 **Dwell.** This verb is imperative. Hence . . . dwell, i.e. depart and dwell in, &c.

6 **Fancies.** The same word as Phantasies, images formed in the mind ; from the Greek *φαίνω* (*phaino*), to show. **fond.** The word is here used in its old sense of foolish, silly. ' A *fond* thing, vainly invented.' Articles of Ch. of E. xxii. A *fondling* was a foolish person. Hence, Bishop Barrow, in one of his sermons, describes a profane swearer as a *fondling*. So Shakespeare :—

' And, for his dreams, I wonder he is so *fond*
 To trust the mockery of unquiet slumbers.'

Rich. III. (iii. 2).

gaudy. Gay in colour. (Lat. *gaudeo*, to rejoice). Gaudy, as a noun, is a feast held in colleges in Oxford and elsewhere, in commemoration of their founder. There is an O. E. word *gaud*.

8 **Gay.** (Fr. *gai*.) Lively, cheerful, merry, jovial. The motes are said to be gay, because they keep dancing up and down.
motes. Mote is probably the same word as mite, and here means

Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train. 10

little particles of dust. Matt. vii. 5: 'First cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the *mote* out of thy brother's eye.' South, in one of his sermons, says: 'For *moats* may enter where beams cannot; and small offences find admittance where great and clamorous crimes fright the soul to a standing upon its guard to prevent the invasion.' **people the sunbeams.** Look at a ray of sunlight coming into a dark room, and observe the little particles of dust that dance up and down in it, and you will see how suitable this expression is.

9 **Likest.** Superlative of like, i.e. most like. The fancies he alludes to above are like the gay motes, but most like hovering dreams. Like is an adjective which is followed by the objective case. Sometimes *to* is expressed, but this was more usual formerly than now: 'Man is like *to* vanity.'—Psalm cxliv. 4. The comparative, *liker*, was formerly used, though both degrees are now obsolete. 'This plan, as laid down by him, looks *liker* an universal art than a distinct logick.'—Baker 'On Learning.' **hovering dreams.** *Hover* is an old word, meaning to float on the water, to remain in a place.

10 **Pensioners.** (From the Latin *pendo, pensum*, to weigh out money; hence, to pay.) Pensioners are therefore paid dependants, though the word is now generally applied where no direct service is required in return. It is here used in the sense of retinue, as in the following lines:—

'I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green:
The cowslips tall her *pensioners* be;
In their gold coats spots you see.
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours.'

Shakespeare, *Mids. Night's Dream*, ii. 1.

Queen Elizabeth established a guard composed of handsome young noblemen and gentlemen under the name of *Pensioners*. **Morpheus.** Son of Somnus, the god of sleep, a title which is sometimes given to himself. He is generally represented with a cup in one hand and poppies in the other, because their juice, when taken, produces sleep. Laudanum and opium are both extracted from

But hail, thou goddess, sage and holy,
 Hail, divinest Melancholy !
 Whose saintly visage is too bright
 To hit the sense of human sight,
 And therefore to our weaker view 15
 O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue ;
 Black, but such as in esteem
 Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,

poppies. **train.** (Derived through the Latin *traho*, to draw, lead through ; from the French, *trainer*.) The *train* of a robe is that part of it which is *drawn* along the ground. A *train* of carriages is so called because it is *drawn* along by the engine. A *train* of gunpowder consists of gunpowder *drawn* out in a line. *Train* oil is so called because it is *drawn* from the fat of whales. *Train* in the text means a long-*drawn* line of followers or attendants.

11 **But hail.** Compare 'L'Allegro,' 11 :

'But come, thou goddess,' &c.

sage. Wise. (Fr. *sage* ; Lat. *sagax*.)

12 **Divinest Melancholy.** See 'L'Allegro,' 1, where he calls her 'loathed Melancholy.' The mood is of course quite the opposite of that described in the former poem.

13 **Visage.** Face, countenance ; the word is now rarely used except with some ideas of dislike or horror, but formerly not so—

'Love and beauty still that *visage* grace ;
 Death cannot fright 'em from their wonted place.'

Waller.

14 **To hit the sense of human sight,** i.e. to be looked at. So we have—

'A strange, invisible perfume *hits* the sense.'

Shaks. *Ant. and Cleop.* ii. 2.

16 **Staid Wisdom.** A stay is a support, a prop. To stay is to support, keep a thing steady. Hence, Staid Wisdom is that which is steadied, kept firm, grave, sober. Wisdom is here personified, i.e. spoken of as a person, by a figure of speech called Personification or Prosopopœia.

18 **Prince Memnon's Sister.** Memnon, in the story of

Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
 To set her beauty's praise above 20
 The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended :
 Yet thou art higher far descended :
 Thee bright-hair'd Vesta, long of yore,
 To solitary Saturn bore ;
 His daughter she ; in Saturn's reign, 25
 Such mixture was not held a stain :
 Oft in glimmering bowers and glades

the Trojan war, is represented as a prince of the Ethiopians who came to the aid of Priam, and was killed by Achilles. Though of a very dark complexion, he was of splendid beauty, and the same might be presumed of any sister of his. (Odys. xi. 522.)

19 **Starr'd Ethiop queen**, i.e. Cassiope, wife of Cepheus, King of the Ethiopians, and mother of Andrōmēda. She challenged the Nereids (nymphs of the sea) for the superiority of beauty. In revenge they got Poseidon (Neptune, the god of the sea) to send a raving monster to ravage Ethiopia. Andrōmēda, whom her mother Cassiope tenderly loved, was about to be sacrificed to this monster to appease the wrath of Neptune, when she was saved by her lover, Perseus. Cassiope was made a southern constellation, consisting of thirteen stars, and called Cassiopeia ; hence Milton's epithet *starr'd*. Cassiope is represented in old pictures as a black female figure marked with white stars.

23 **Vesta**. The mythology is Milton's. **Saturn**, son of Urānus and Terra, is said to have devoured all his sons except Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, who were preserved by their mother, Rhea. Saturn afterwards became partner with Janus in the kingdom of Italy, and taught the people agriculture, &c. He is called solitary because he was driven out of his kingdom and away from his family by his son Jupiter. Vesta was considered the goddess of the fireside, and Milton therefore implies that Melancholy comes from solitude or retirement at one's own fireside.

25 **She**, i.e. Vesta. **in Saturn's reign**, i.e. in times of the heathen mythology.

26 **Such mixture**. Vesta was the daughter of Saturn as well as his wife. So Milton represents her, for such alliances are common in mythology.

27 **Glimmering**. Glimmer is a frequentative of gleam, and

He met her, and in secret shades
 Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
 Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove. 30
 Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
 Sober, stedfast, and demure,

means here to shine at intervals only, and thus to shine faintly. **bower** is from an O.E. word *bur*, meaning a room, a chamber. The second syllable of cupboard is derived from this word. **glades**. A glade is a light passage made through a wood. It is said to be derived from O.E. *gehlidan*, to cover, and to mean a spot covered or hid with trees. Spenser, in the 'Faery Queen,' seems to use it in this sense:—

'Far in the forest, by a hollow *glade*,
 Covered with mossie shrubs, which, spreading brode,
 Did underneath them make a gloomy shade,
 Where foot of living creature never trode,
 Ne scarce wyld beasts durst come,
 There was this wight's abode.'

29 **Woody Ida**. Ida was a mountain, or rather a ridge of mountains, near Troy. It was covered with a green wood, which is said to have been frequented by the gods during the Trojan war. **grove**, O.E. *græf*, a grove; from *grafan*, to dig, because it was hollowed out of a thicket of trees, and did not apply to the thicket itself. In modern English it applies to both. Grave (noun), engrave, graving, are all derived from the same root.

30 **Fear of Jove**, i.e. of Jupiter, who expelled his father, Saturn, from his throne.

31 **Pensive** (from the Latin *pendo*, *pensum*, to weigh, consider, ponder) conveys an idea of sadness as well as thoughtfulness. **Nun**. The poet speaks of Melancholy as a pensive nun. The latter word is from O.E. *nonna*. The Italian is the same word, and means a grandmother, because the first nuns would naturally be elderly women.

32 **Demure** (Fr. *des mœurs*, of good manners and morals) as now used includes the notion that the modesty and sobriety of manner assumed are not altogether founded on reality. Formerly demure meant truly virtuous and good, as in the text. H. More, a 17th century writer, says, 'These and such-like irreligious pranks *did this Dionysius play*, who, notwithstanding, fared no worse than

All in a robe of darkest grain,
 Flowing with majestic train,
 And sable stole of Cyprus lawn,

35

the most *demure* and innocent, dying no other death than what usually other mortals do.'—*Antidote against Atheism.*

33 **Darkest grain.** We now use this word *grain* in the sense of texture or fibre of a material, as the grain of wood, &c., understanding by the expression 'rogue *in grain*' a rogue in his very fibre. But this is not the primary meaning of the word. It originally implied colour, as in this passage, and was given especially to the colour known as cochineal, consisting of the bodies of certain insects which are brought chiefly from Spain and Portugal, and when dried look something like *grains* of corn. Another name for this substance was *kermes*, whence the names of *carmine* and *crimson*, colours obtained from it, are derived. *Grain*, then, meant the colours obtained from cochineal, varying from bright carmine to deep purple. Chaucer writes:—

'Him needeth not his colour for to dien
 With Brasil, ne with *grain* of Portingale.'

Milton, describing the archangel Michael, says:—

'Over his lucid arms
 A military vest of purple flowed,
 Lovelier than Melibœan, or the *grain*
 Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
 In time of truce; Iris had dipped the woof.'

'Grain of Sarra' is Tyrian purple, Sarra being a name for Tyre. The colour obtained from *kermes*, or *grain*, was very durable, and hence a rogue *in grain* really means one whose bad character sticks so closely to him that it cannot be washed out. When merchants recommended their stuffs they would naturally say they were dyed '*in grain*.' Thus the phrase '*in grain*' came to express durability.

Antiph. That's a fault that water will mend.
Dromio. No, sir, 'tis *in grain*; Noah's flood could not do it.'
 Shakespeare, *Comedy of Errors*, iii. 2.

The above is Professor Marsh's explanation. Professor Masson,

Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait ;

however, differs from him, and calls attention to the use of the term *graining* by painters, to show that the word *grain* does really mean fibre, and brings forward the expressions, 'ingrained vice,' 'ingrained folly,' 'cross-grained, against the grain,' &c., as examples of its use in the primary sense of fibre. **robe of darkest grain**, therefore, means a robe of the darkest shade of colour to be obtained from '*kermes*,' or '*grain*,' or else one made of the darkest fibre or material.

35 **Sable**. (Fr. *sable*.) A small animal with deep black fur, found in Siberia. The name is given to the skin, which is much prized, and is also used to denote anything of the same colour. **stole** (Lat. *stola*), a robe, now exclusively applied to the black scarf worn by clergymen over the surplice. **Cyprus**, a thin, black, transparent stuff, supposed to have been made in the island of Cyprus, whence it derived its name. Some copies, however, have *cypress*, which is probably derived from the old French word *crespe*, crisped or curled (modern *crêpe*, whence crape).

'Lawn as white as driven snow,
Cyprus black as e'er was crow.'

Shakespeare, *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4.

The cypress tree (Lat. *cupressus*) was anciently used at funerals, and has hence become an emblem of mourning. **lawn** (Lat. *lana*, wool). But *lawn*, a grass-plat, is from O. E. *laund*, a meadow.

36 **Decent**. (Lat. *decens*, becoming.)

37 **Wonted**, accustomed, usual. **state**, i.e. stately mien and behaviour. The word *state*, among other things, formerly meant a royal or ceremonial chair, or the canopy over it. Stately behaviour, or state, might be maintained after the chair had been left.

38 **Musing**. This word is derived from the French *muser*, to muse, dream, study, look at fixedly as a foolish person would do. And this French word *muser* is derived from the Latin *mus*, a mouse. Anything odd or silly in a person's character is often described by a reference to some little animal. Thus the Scotch say of a person who has some odd or foolish notion in his head, that he has a '*bee* in his bonnet.' The French say he has a '*mouse*

And looks comméring with the skies,
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes: 40
 There, held in holy passion still,
 Forget thyself to marble, till
 With a sad leaden downward cast
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
 And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet, 45
 Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
 And hears the Muses in a ring
 Aye round about Jove's altar sing:
 And add to these retirèd Leisure,

in his head.' There is also a vulgar expression in English, 'the maggot bit him,' meaning that a person has done something weak or foolish. **gait.** The O.E. *gate* means a street or way, hence manner or way of doing a thing. The word is still commonly used in this sense in the North of England. Applied to the way or manner of walking, it has acquired a distinct spelling.

39 **Comméring.** *Commérce*, which, as a verb, is now obsolete, means to traffic, trade, hold intercourse with.

40 **Rapt** (Lat. *rapio, raptum*, to seize, snatch away) here means enraptured, carried away by one's feelings.

41 **Passion** (Lat. *patior, passus*, to suffer) is, properly, any effect caused in the mind by external agency. Then any violent commotion of the mind, such as love, anger, zeal, suffering, &c.

42 **Forget thyself to marble**, i.e. to become as forgetful of thyself as though made of marble; become insensible to external impressions.

43 **Leaden-coloured** betokens melancholy or excess of thoughtfulness.

45 **Peace, Quiet and Fast.** These are personified.

46 **With gods doth diet**, i.e. feed on such unsubstantial fare as the gods were supposed to do. The word diet is derived from the Latin *diæta*, and that from the Greek *διαίτα* (*diaita*), meaning a way of living, especially that prescribed by a physician. It is now rarely employed as an intransitive verb as in the text, but is sometimes used with the reflexive pronoun; as, to diet oneself.

47 **The Muses**, the goddesses of poetry, music, &c.

48 **Aye**, ever, always.

49 **Leisure**, another example of Personification. Leisure is

That in trim gardens takes his pleasure ; 50
 But first and chiefest with thee bring
 Him that yon soars on golden wing,
 Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
 The Cherub Contemplation ;
 And the mute Silence hist along, 55
 'Less Philomel will deign a song,
 In her sweetest saddest plight,
 Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
 While Cynthia checks her dragon-yoke,

from the French *loisir*, and that from the Latin *licere*, to permit, allow, be lawful ; as the French *plaisir* is from Latin *placere*, to be pleasing.

52 **Yon**, yonder ; in common use in the north of England.

53 **Fiery-wheeled throne**. The poet here alludes to the great vision of the Sapphire throne recorded in Ezekiel x., and makes a rather bold use of it.

54 **Cherub**, a Hebrew word, meaning a kind of angel. The correct plural is *cherubim*, and of seraph, *seraphim*, though we find the English forms cherubs, cherubims, seraphs, seraphims, even in the best writers.

55 **Hist**. This word is imperative, joined to bring, and the poet seems to mean 'move through the mute silence hushingly, or saying *hush!*' i.e. bidding the silence to continue, unless the nightingale shall break it with one of her songs.

56 '**Less**, an abbreviation for *unless*. So we have 'parting for departing, 'cause for because, &c. **Philomel**. In the heathen mythology, the daughter of Pandion. She was turned into a nightingale.

57 **Plight** is an Old English word, meaning a fold or bending, and thence a state or condition, especially one of difficulty.

59 **Cynthia**, a surname of Diana, from Mount Cynthus in the island of Delos, where she was born. Diana was the goddess of hunting, and was supposed to be the same as the moon. **dragon-yoke**, i.e. her chariot drawn by dragons. The poet means that the moon stops over a particular oak-tree to listen to the song of the nightingale. In ancient mythology, however, it is only the chariot of Demeter or Ceres that is drawn by dragons.

Gently o'er the accustom'd oak : 60
 Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of Folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy !
 Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among,
 I woo, to hear thy even-song ;
 And, missing thee, I walk unseen' 65
 On the dry smooth-shaven green
 To behold the wandering Moon
 Riding near her highest noon
 Like one that has been led astray
 Through the heaven's wide pathless way ; 70
 And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
 Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
 I hear the far-off Curfew sound,
 Over some wide-water'd shore, 75

60 **Accustom'd oak**, i.e. the nightingale's favourite one.

65 **Unseen**. The poem is the antithesis of 'L'Allegro,' where the poet wanders 'not unseen.'

67 **Wandering Moon**, alluding merely to her travelling through the sky.

68 **Highest noon**, i.e. the highest point in the heavens to which she will rise, because noon is the time when the sun reaches the highest point to which he rises during the day. **Noon** is derived from the Latin *nona (hora)*, the ninth hour. The Roman day was divided into twelve hours from sunrise to sunset. The ninth hour was, therefore, about three o'clock in the afternoon. In Norway the word *non* or *nun* is still used in this sense, to denote the third meal or resting-time of the day. In Roman Catholic countries Divine service was performed six times a day—viz. *matutina, prima, tertia, sexta, nona, vespera, completorium*. *Nona*, the fifth service, was held about midday in Italy at an early period.

74 **Curfew**. William the Conqueror introduced into England a law that, at the ringing of a bell at eight o'clock in the evening, all fires and lights should be extinguished. This was called the *Curfew bell*, from the French *couvre*, to cover, *feu*, fire. It is still

Swinging slow with sullen roar :
 Or, if the air will not permit,
 Some still removèd place will fit,
 Where glowing embers through the room
 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom ; 80
 Far from all resort of mirth,
 Save the cricket on the hearth,
 Or the bellman's drowsy charm
 To bless the doors from nightly harm.
 Or let my lamp at midnight hour 85
 Be seen in some high lonely tower,

rung as an old custom in many parts of England, though the law has been long obsolete.

76 **Slow.** Adjective for adverb, slowly.

77 **The air will not permit,** i.e. the weather.

78 **Removèd.** Remote, retired, sequestered.

82 **Cricket.** An insect so called because of the sharp creaking sound which it makes. This belongs to the class of words called onomatopœic, i.e. words which imitate sounds, from the Greek *ὄνομα* (onoma), a name, *ποιέω* (poieo), to make. Many of these are common to several languages. Familiar examples in English are—bleat, rattle, dash, murmur, rustle. **hearth.** The floor of a fire-place, from the O.E. *heorth*.

83 **Bellman.** i.e. the watchman who formerly in this country used to walk about the streets all night, to give alarm of fire or other danger when necessary. He rang a bell at intervals and announced the state of the weather. **charm.** A cry or song (from Lat. *carmen*, a song); usually applied to verses which were supposed to produce some magical effect.

84 **Bless the doors.** Herrick, in his poem of 'The Bellman,' quotes the Bellman's Blessing:—

'From noise of scare-fires rest ye free,
 From murder, Benedicite!
 From all mischances that may fright
 Your pleasing slumbers in the night,
 Mercy secure ye all, and keep
 The goblin from ye while ye sleep.'

Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
 With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
 The spirit of Plato, to unfold
 What worlds or what vast regions hold 90
 The immortal mind that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook ;
 And of those demons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
 Whose power hath a true consent 95
 With planet, or with element.

87 **The Bear.** The constellation of the Great Bear, which never sets, in our latitude ; and therefore the poet means by 'outwatching the Bear,' sitting up till daylight, when all the stars disappear.

88 **Thrice-great Hermes,** i.e. the Egyptian king and philosopher Thot, whom the Greeks called Hermes Trismegistus, i.e. Hermes the Thrice-great, because they identified him with their god Hermes or Mercury, and attributed to him the possession of all knowledge and the invention of all arts. Books which bear his name are still extant, but they were really written by the opponents of Christianity at Alexandria and elsewhere. They comprise treatises on theology, philosophy, astrology, chemistry, medicine, &c.

88 **Unsphere,** i.e. bring the spirit of Plato out of the *sphere* or *place* in which he now is.

89 **Plato** was a Greek philosopher who lived in the fourth century before Christ. In a book of his called 'Phædo' he discusses the immortality of the soul. **unfold,** i.e. explain.

92 **Her mansion,** i.e. the body (from the Lat. *maneo*, to stay, *mansio*, an abiding-place).

'Can storied urn, or animated bust,
 Back to its *mansion* call the fleeting breath?'—Gray's *Elegy*.

92 **Fleshly nook,** i.e. the body.

93 **Demons,** deities ; from the Greek *δαίμων* (*daimōn*). The demons of the four so-called elements—earth, air, fire, and water—are alluded to.

95 **True consent,** i.e. connection and sympathy with.

96 **Planet,** from the Greek *πλανήτης* (*planētes*), a wanderer, the name given to those stars which move in regular orbits. **element.** A

Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
 In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
 Or the tale of Troy divine ;

100

simple substance, first principle. It was formerly thought that earth, air, fire, and water were elements, but it is now known that they are not so ; air consisting of at least two elements, oxygen and nitrogen, and water of two, oxygen and hydrogen.

97 **Gorgeous.** Splendid, showy, fine (from the Fr. *gorge*, the throat, because of the ancient custom of placing many ornaments round the neck). **Tragedy.** A serious drama which usually ends in some fatal event. The word is derived from the Greek *τραγος* (*tragos*), a he-goat, and *αοιδή* (*aoide*), a song—so called either because the oldest tragedies were exhibited when a goat was sacrificed, or because a goat was the prize, or because the actors were clothed in goat-skins. The Pensive man has been reading philosophy and science ; now he turns to reading tragedy, but only the best and most solemn plays, such as those of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Tragedy is here personified.

98 **Scepter'd pall**, i.e. a royal cloak. Pall is from the Latin *pallium*, which was formerly expressly used to denote the cloak sent by the Pope for the installation of a new bishop, Pall is now applied only to a covering for a coffin.

99 **Presenting**, i.e. representing. **Thebes.** The ancient capital of Bœotia in Greece. Œdipus, the King of Thebes, met with great misfortunes, which form the subject of a tragedy by Sophocles. **Pelops**, King of Pisa, in Elis. The name of the southern part of Greece, the Peloponnesus, is said to be derived from him. **line.** Race, family.

100 **Troy divine.** Troy, a city in Phrygia, in the north-west of Asia Minor, was besieged and taken by the Greeks under Agamemnon. The Iliad of Homer gives an account of its siege and capture, whilst the misfortunes of Priam, its last king, of Hecuba, his queen, of Polyxena, their daughter, of Polydorus, their youngest son, and of other characters in the history, are embodied in various Greek tragedies. Troy is called *divine* because it is said to have been built by Neptune, god of the sea. Or the adjective may qualify tale, and refer to the noble character of the Iliad as a *poem*.

Or what (though rare) of later age
 Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
 But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
 Might raise Musaeus from his bower !
 Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing 105
 Such notes as, warbled to the string,
 Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
 And made hell grant what love did seek !
 Or call up him that left half-told
 The story of Cambuscan bold, 110
 Of Camball, and of Algarsife,

101 **Of later age.** In allusion to the tragedies of Shakespeare.

102 **Buskin'd stage,** i.e. the stage on which tragedy was performed, the actors in which wore high-heeled boots or buskins. (See 'L'Allegro,' note to line 132.)

103 **Sad Virgin,** i.e. Melancholy.

104 **Musaeus** was regarded among the ancient Greeks as the author of various poetical compositions. Some say he was the son of Orpheus (see 'L'Allegro,' note to line 145). The poet expresses a wish that the power of Melancholy could recover some of the most ancient poems, such as the sacred hymns, &c., of Musaeus or of Orpheus, which were perhaps nobler than any that have come down to us.

108 **What love did seek.** Orpheus was a celebrated singer and musician among the ancient Greeks, who played so exquisitely on the harp or lyre, that, it is said, the wild beasts, and even the rocks and trees, used to follow him. Eurydice was the wife of Orpheus. On her death he descended into Hades to recover her, if possible ; and the sweetness of his music so charmed Pluto that he granted his prayer, on condition that he should not look on Eurydice till he got her into the upper world. On their way out of Hades, however, he turned to see if she was following him, when she was caught back again.

109 **Him that left half-told,** i.e. Chaucer, whose 'Squire's Tale' in the 'Canterbury Tales' is left unfinished. The Cambuscan of the story was a Tartar king, who had two sons, Algarsife and Camballo (not Camball), and a daughter Cănacă. Milton pro-

And who had Canace to wife,
 That own'd the virtuous ring and glass ;
 And of the wondrous horse of brass,
 On which the Tartar king did ride : 115
 And if aught else great bards beside
 In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
 Of turneys, and of trophies hung,

nounces the name *Cambuscan*, but it is not so in Chaucer, as the following extract will show :—

'A faire person he was and fortunate,
 And kept alway so well royál estate,
 That there n'as nowhere such another man,
 This noble king, this Tartar *Cambuscan*.'

112 **And who**, i.e. and of him who.

113 **Virtuous ring and glass**, i.e. possessed of magical virtue.

'Lifting up his *virtuous* staff on high,
 He smote the sea, which calmèd was with speed.'
 Spenser, *Faery Queen*.

'With one *virtuous* touch the arch-chemick sun
 Produces, with terrestrial humour mixed,
 Here in the dark so many precious things.'
 Milton, *Paradise Lost*.

The ring and mirror were presents which the knight brought to Cănăcē from the King of Arabia and India. If she wore the ring on her thumb, or carried it in her purse, she should be able to understand and converse with every kind of bird, and

'Every grass that groweth upon root'

she should know, and what diseases it would cure. In the glass or mirror she would be able to see things represented which would be otherwise unknown to her.

114 **Horse of brass**. A magic horse which the King of 'Araby and Inde' sends to *Cambuscan*.

116 **Great bards**. Such as Spenser, Ariosto, Tasso.

118 **Turneys**. Tournaments, mock battles, which were a *favourite amusement* with the nobles of the Middle Ages. of

Of forests and enchantments drear,
 Where more is meant than meets the ear. 120
 Thus Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
 Till civil-suited Morn appear,
 Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
 With the Attick boy to hunt,
 But kercheft in a comely cloud, 125
 While rocking winds are piping loud,
 Or usher'd with a shower still,

trophies hung. Arms, &c., taken in battle and hung up as memorials of victory.

119 **Enchantments.** (From the French *enchanter*; Lat. *cantare*, to sing; whence also our words cant and chaunt are derived.) Enchantments were verses which, when sung or recited, were supposed to have a magical power. **drear.** Mournful, dismal, sorrowful. Milton here [alludes to Spenser's *Faery Queen*, the scene of which is laid in an enchanted land, in the forests and castles of which the knights whom he introduces meet with many wonderful adventures.

120 **Where more is meant,** i.e. having a double meaning. Underneath the story of the *Faery Queen* is an allegory showing the triumph of Virtue.

121 **Oft see.** This is imperative.

122 **Civil-suited,** i.e. dressed in the plain garb of a citizen as differing from that of an officer or courtier.

123 **Trick'd.** Dressed. **frounc'd.** Curled and plaited (from the Fr. *froncer*, to plait).

124 **Attick boy.** Cephalus, to whom, in the Greek legends, Eos (Morning) made love.

125 **Kercheft** (other copies have kerchief and chercheft). A verb formed from the noun kerchief, which is from the Fr. *couvre*, to cover, and *chef*, the head. A kerchief is therefore properly a covering for the head; so that the compounds handkerchief, neckerchief, and, more than all, neckhandkerchief, are very anomalous.

126 **Rocking winds,** i.e. rocking ships, trees, &c. **piping,** whistling. **loud.** Adjective for adverb, loudly.

127 **Usher'd.** Usher, from the French *huissier*, a door-

When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the rustling leaves,
 With minute drops from off the eaves. 130
 And, when the sun begins to fling
 His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
 To archèd walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
 Of pine, or monumental oak, 135
 Where the rude axe, with heavèd stroke,

keeper, means to introduce strangers. An usher in a school is one who introduces young scholars to higher learning.

128 **His fill.** The use of the neuter possessive pronoun *its* did not become thoroughly prevalent in England till the time of Charles II., the old English for the possessive *his, her, its* being *his, hire, his*. Thus we find in the Bible the word *his* often used where we should now use *its*. Cf. Exod. xxv. 31: 'And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: *his* shaft, and *his* branches, *his* bowls, *his* knops, and *his* flowers shall be of the same.'

130 **Minute drops**, not minute, very small, but minute, i.e. falling every minute or oftener, as minute guns, which are fired every minute as signals of distress. **eaves**, the edges of a roof, from O.E. *efese*, margin, edge.

133 **Twilight groves**, shady groves, where it is neither light nor dark. Twilight = between lights.

134 **Sylvan**, or Sylvanus (Lat. *sylvā* or *silva*, a wood), the god of woods.

135 **Monumental oak**, memorial oak, old, telling of by-gone years. Oak trees are often planted to commemorate particular events, such as royal visits, proclamations of peace, &c.

136 **Heavèd stroke**. To *heave* is to raise, lift up, as to *heave* the anchor on board ship. Hence *heaven* is a place that is raised or lifted up. *Heave* is also intransitive, to swell, as a *heaving sea*, a *heaving bosom*. Our idea of a coal-heaver is rather a man who pitches the coal into the cellar than the one who lifts it up into the wagon and carries it into the house, and yet the latter is the more correct notion. *Heavèd* in the text refers to the axe which *must* be raised before the blow can be delivered. As, however, it

Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
 There in close covert by some brook,
 Where no profaner eye may look, 140
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with honied thigh,
 That at her flowery work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring,
 With such consort as they keep, 145
 Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;

often happens that persons no sooner pick or raise things up than they throw them down again, the word *heave* comes to be equivalent to throw, and it may possibly be used in a somewhat similar sense here.

137 **Nymphs.** Inferior goddesses who were supposed to haunt woods and streams. **daunt**, frighten, terrify.

138 **Haunt**, a place in which one is frequently found, from the French *hanter*, to frequent.

139 **Covert**, a hiding-place, from the French *couvre*, to cover, conceal.

140 **Profaner.** Profane is derived from the Latin *pro*, forth, and *fanum*, a temple, and meant originally that which was not sacred. Now, however, it has a much stronger meaning, as in the expression '*profane language.*' But the original meaning is retained in connection with history, *profane* meaning secular merely as distinguished from sacred.

141 **Garish**, bright, glaring, from O. E. *gare*, to stare.

142 **Honied thigh**, thigh laden with honey. The poet is wrong in his natural history here, for the honey is carried, not on the thigh of the bee, but in a sort of stomach or pouch. It is the pollen that is carried on the thigh.

144 **Murmuring.** See note, line 82.

145 **Consort**, companionship (from the Latin *con*, with or together, and *sors, sortis*, lot, fortune), alluding to such other sounds of nature as accompany those mentioned by the poet.

146 **Dewy-feather'd Sleep**, so called because it descends upon the eyelids as gently as dew upon the grass.

And let some strange mysterious Dream
 Wave at his wings in airy stream
 Of lively portraiture display'd
 Softly on my eyelids laid. 150
 And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
 Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
 But let my due feet never fail 155
 To walk the studious cloister's pale,
 And love the high-embowèd roof,
 With antique pillars massy proof,

147 **Let some strange mysterious Dream.** Professor Masson says the meaning of this difficult passage is: Let some strange, mysterious dream wave (i.e. move to and fro) at his (i.e. Sleep's) wings in airy stream, &c. Wave is here a neuter verb, as in *Paradise Lost*, xii. 593.

'At whose front a flaming sword,
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round.'

149 **Portraiture**, from the Fr. *pourtraire*, to draw, delineate; Latin, *trahere*, to draw. Lively portraiture, i.e. dreams such as we call vivid, something very real.

151 **Sweet music breathe**, imperative.

154 **Unseen Genius of the wood**, i.e. the deity who has charge of it.

155 **Due feet**, i.e. accustomed or expected to walk in the cloister. **cloister**, lit. a shut-in place, usually applied to a covered walk open at one side, and attached to a religious building, from the Latin *claudo*, to shut; *claustrum*, a shut-in place. The French *clôître* and the German *Kloster* mean a monastery.

156 **Pale**, boundary, from the Latin *palus*, a stake, because stakes were often used to mark the boundaries of land.

157 **Embowèd**, arched, perhaps from O.E. *bugan*, to bend, whence we get bow, bough, &c. But *bower* is from O.E. *bur*, a chamber.

158 **Antique**, ancient (Lat. *antiquus*), formerly written *antick*. Hence *anticks*, old-fashioned, curious tricks. When art was revived in the 14th and 15th centuries, remains of ancient sculpture

And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light : 160
 There let the pealing organ blow,
 To the full-voic'd quire below,
 In service high, and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into ecstasies, 165
 And bring all heaven before mine eyes.
 And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peaceful hermitage,
 The hairy gown and mossy cell,
 Where I may sit and rightly spell 170

were used as models. These were called *anticks* (antiques). In time these degenerated into the grotesque figures which we now sometimes see on cathedrals, parish churches, &c., and later on they still further degenerated into figures of savages, fauns, and devils dancing, and hence extravagant gestures and tricks came to be called *anticks*.

158 **Massy proof**, i.e. proof against the heavy mass they have to support.

159 **Storied windows**, i.e. painted with stories or histories taken from Holy Scripture or the lives of saints and heroes. **dight**, decked, adorned. O.E. *dihtan*, to prepare, set in order.

164 **As may**, an old expression for *such as may*.

165 **Ecstasies**. Sometimes written exstasies, is from a Greek word *ἐκστασις* (ekstasis), which means the removal of a thing from its proper place: hence distraction of the mind from terror, astonishment, or joy.

168 **Hermitage**, the cell or habitation of a hermit. Hermit was formerly written eremite, from the Gr. *ἐρημίτης* (eremites), a dweller in the desert. (*ἐρημος*, *erēmos*, a desert.)

169 **Hairy gown**, alluding to the coarse dress of the hermit. John the Baptist's raiment of camel's hair was probably in the poet's mind when he wrote this.

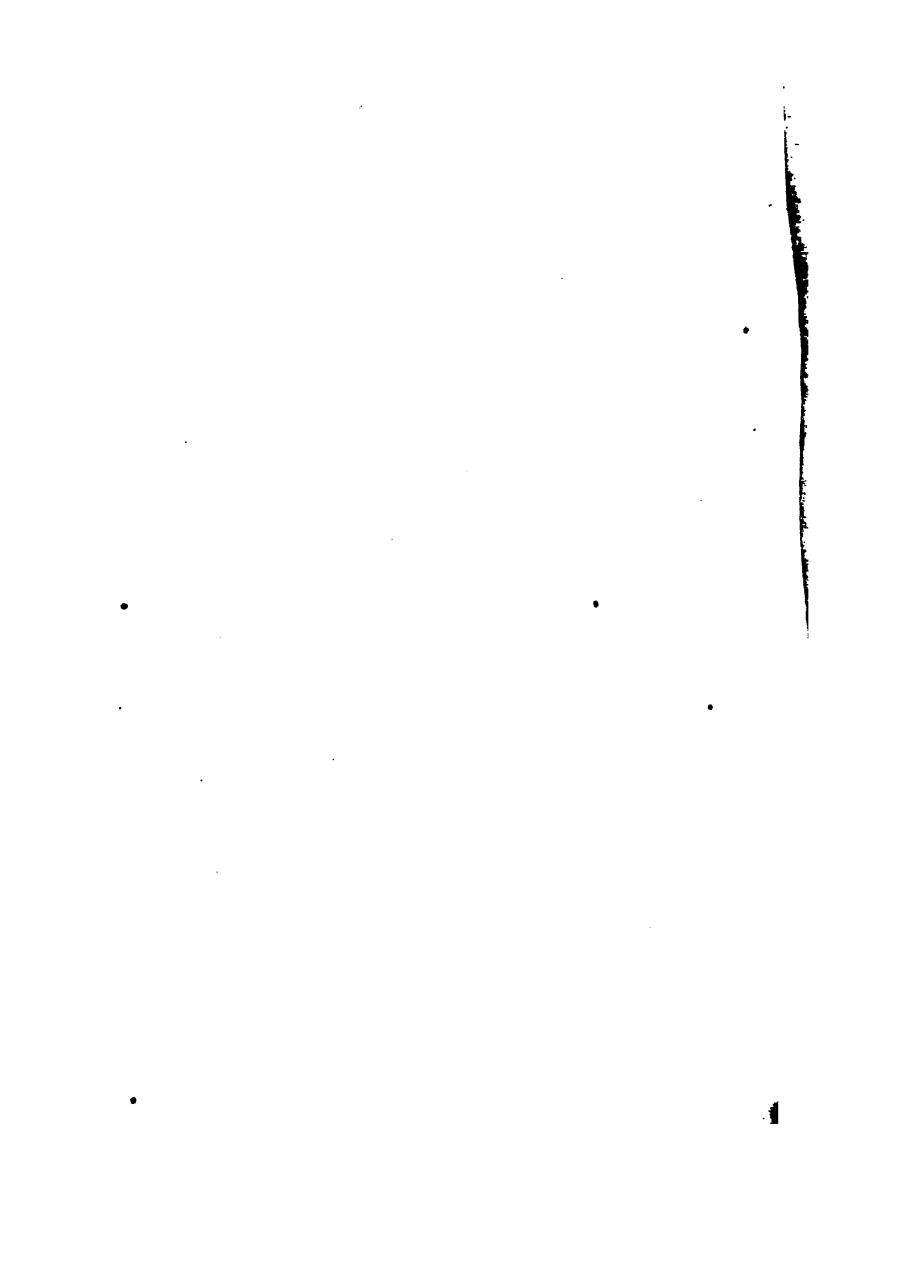
170 **Spell** here means to read, study carefully. It is derived from the O. E. *spelian*, to tell, *as to tell the letters*, and is the same as *spel* in *gospel*. *Spell*, of work, is another word, being derived from O. E. *spelian*, to take a turn for another.

Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew ;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

175

173 **Till old experience do attain**, i.e. until experience should give a certain power of foretelling what is to happen.

174 The poet probably alludes to the practice of astrology, or the science of the stars, by which certain persons professed to foretell events, and to the study of the medicinal properties of plants.



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